had and his lips are worth all his words. These two works arc the most beautiful, and immediately afterward come the little bronze *Amor* and the *Zuccone* of the Campanile, of which, alas, one can see only the bust here. Verrocchio's *David* is admirable too.

31

December

O little cloister of San Marco, I should have wished you full of roses.

. . , Return along the shores of the Arno — setting sun; water losing itself in golden sands; in the far distance, some fishermen; the smoke rising from the roofs, at first gray, becomes gilded when the sun touches it. That radiance lasts for a long time; the roofs near San Miniato, the white walls of the villas become the color of unripe apricots; the cypresses around them seem all the darker. The fall of the Arno has as it were some mothcr-of-pearl glints of an extromely pale green and, lower down, of that same color with a tint of orange.

The fishermen in the distance arc carrying their bow-nets and returning to their boats. . . . The wonder of those lengthening days. . . .

Obsessions of the Orient, of the desert, of its ardor and its emptiness, of the shade of the palm gardens, of the loose white garments — obsessions in which my senses stampede, my nerves become exasperated, and which, at the beginning of each night, make me think sleep impossible.

A few admirable evenings, golden and ashen pink. . . . The shores of the Arno spread apart as they leave the town and uncover themselves. There are poplar woods on the left; on the right, clumps of reeds and the dark gardens of the Castine. The poplars arc leafless; the whole golden sky passes through them and the light is softened by them. From the shore sandbanks stretch out to the middle of the river; the fishermen

and the bare-legged sand-diggers get into flat-bottomed boats, step into the water, and load the boats with the silt and sand of the shore. Opposite the Cascine, on the top of the hill, a sort of church among dark cypresses.

Em. somewhat tired. Bad overcast weather. I go out a bit toward evening and shadow a couple of fellows who intrigue me. In *Valentin Knox* [a] I shall speak at length of that mania for following people.

In the evening we play parlor games. Em., too ill to take part, went to bed after dinner. And all evening long I suffer because of not having remained with her and think, each time that the door is opened or that someone shouts too loudly, that the noise will waken her and increase

[3] A book that Gide projected but never wrote.